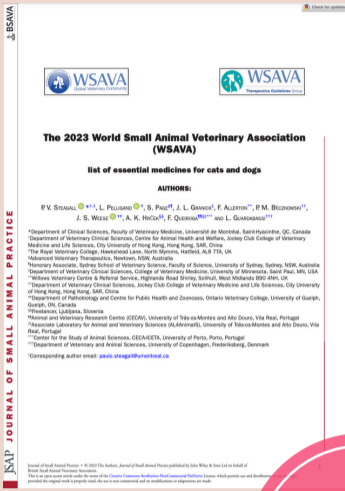




Availability of Veterinary Medicines

A Global Issue



WSAVA Therapeutics Committee published the **List of Essential Medicines for cats and dogs** which includes **core** and **complimentary** medicines required for management of the most important diseases while maintaining minimum standards of care.

Regulatory oversight support

The lack of specific medicines:

- compromises **animal welfare**
- prevents veterinarians from providing **minimum standards of care**
- leads to veterinarians' **compassion fatigue**



To better quantify this problem the WSAVA Therapeutics Committee conducted the **global survey on the availability of core essential medicines**.

A global survey on the availability of core essential medicines for cats and dogs with the World Small Animal Veterinary Association member associations

BACKGROUND

- The WSAVA List of Essential Medicines for cats and dogs includes core and complimentary medicines required for preventive care and treatment of the most frequent/important diseases, while maintaining minimum standards of practice to ensure animal welfare.
- The list aims to improve and facilitate regulatory oversight in terms of medicines' availability, drug quality, use and pharmacovigilance.
- On behalf of the WSAVA TGG, the aim of this study was to evaluate the availability of core essential medicines through a global survey with veterinarians from WSAVA member associations.

MATERIALS & METHODS

- The voluntary survey was built by the WSAVA secretariat; content validity was performed by three individuals. Questions were reworded, added or deleted accordingly.
- The survey obtained the name, country, WSAVA member association and e-mail address of each participant. Each core medicine was scored as follows:
 - Available in your country as a veterinary licensed product;
 - Available in your country as a human licensed product - but not legally allowed for veterinary use or not specified for veterinary use;
 - Available and sourced only through online pharmacies;
 - Not available or
 - Unknown.
- Additional three additional questions were asked:
 - Does the veterinary profession regulatory discretion in your country that allows for the off-label use of human medicines? Yes/No
 - To what extent does the access and availability of veterinary medicines in your country affect your ability to provide appropriate veterinary care for dogs and cats; please select a number from 1 to 5 with 1 being no effect and 5 indicating a significant inability to provide appropriate care
 - If there was one thing that WSAVA could do to help address this issue in your country, what would it be? (open box for comments)
- Statistical analyses (Rstudio version 4.1.0) were performed to identify interdependence between region (Africa, Asia, Eastern or Western Europe, etc.) and scores for each class of medicines (i.e., anaesthetics, sedatives, etc.) or organ system using multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) and logistic regression ($p < 0.05$).

RESULTS

- A total of 61 WSAVA member associations completed the survey (n: Asia (10), Africa (7), Eastern Europe (15), Latin America (8), North America (4), Oceania (2) and Western Europe (15)).
- Responses within Asia were more variable than other regions (Figure 1).
- There was an interdependence of scores 4 for benzodiazepines, osmotic diuretic and potassium chloride in Africa and for epinephrine and alpha-2 agonists/antagonists in Asia; scores 3 for opioids and benzodiazepines in Western Europe; scores 3 for alpha-2 antagonists in Latin America, but none with Eastern Europe/Oceania.
- Opioids and benzodiazepines had a higher probability to be available as a veterinary product (score 1) in Western Europe than Asia or Eastern Europe, respectively (Figure 2).
- Benzodiazepines (score 2) had a higher probability to be available as a human licensed product in Eastern than Western Europe.

CONCLUSIONS

- The lack of specific medicines compromises animal welfare and prevent veterinarians from providing care with minimum standards of practice leading to patient suffering and veterinarians' compassion fatigue.
- There is now evidence-based information on the issue of drug accessibility. The veterinary profession should develop an action plan and roadmap to generate awareness, contemplate solutions, and lobby for change.

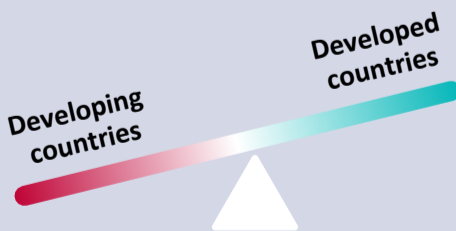
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1. Straggl et al. J Small Animal Practice 61, E162-E176 (2020)

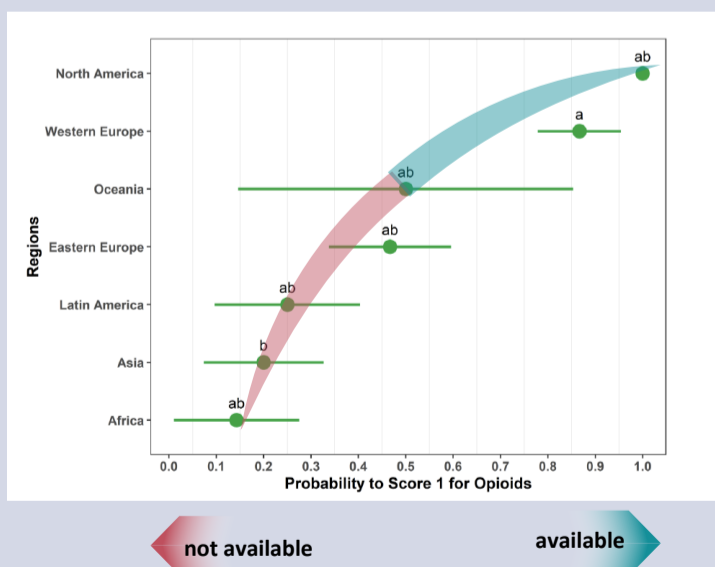
Evidence-based information on drug accessibility

There is a **discrepancy** in drug availability between developed and developing countries.

Benzodiazepines
Osmotic diuretics
Potassium chloride
Epinephrine
Alfa2agonists/antagonists
Opioids



Unavailability of **opioids** compromises acute pain management and animal welfare.



Where to go from there?

To develop an **action plan** and **roadmap** to increase **awareness**, provide **solutions**, and lobby for **change**.

